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## **BYSIEWICZ: TIME RUNNING OUT TO PASS ETHICS REFORM**

SECRETARY OF THE STATE URGES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO TAKE  
ACTION BEFORE MAY 7<sup>TH</sup> CLOSE OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION

**HARTFORD:** Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz called on legislative leaders in the State House of Representatives to reach a compromise and pass an ethics reform package this week.

“When I close the session at midnight on May 7<sup>th</sup> the people of Connecticut will expect real ethics reform,” said Bysiewicz. The legislature has an opportunity to take action and restore the public’s trust in our elected officials and government by passing sweeping and comprehensive reform on all levels and in every branch of government. “There are ten days left to craft a compromise and I urge legislative leaders and the Governor to come to an agreement.”

On April 16th a landmark ethics bill was approved by the State Senate in a unanimous 35-0 vote. Under the Senate’s bi-partisan plan, pensions of corrupt state and municipal officials could be revoked or reduced by judges.

“We have been debating ethics reform for five years,” said Bysiewicz. “It’s time to pass this bill so Connecticut can move forward and put the scandals of the last decade behind

us so that our elected leaders in Hartford can concentrate on the issues facing Connecticut's hard working families.”

In December, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz and Attorney General Richard Blumenthal announced their joint plan to overhaul Connecticut's ethics code for elected and public officials.

Their joint proposal focuses on 5 areas of reform:

- **Pension Revocation.** This law would revoke pension benefits of any state elected official or top appointee convicted of a crime related to their employment. This would include embezzlement, bribery, and fraud. Such a penalty would serve as a powerful deterrent to the people in power.
- **Municipal Code of Ethics.** This proposal will require all municipalities to either establish a code of ethics for municipal elected officials or adopt a model code of municipal ethics promulgated by the Office of State Ethics.
- **False Claims Act.** Penalize contractors who defraud the state and municipalities by filing false claims and work orders. Contractors who are found guilty of defrauding the state could be fined and removed from the pool of state contractors.
- **Judicial Reform.** This law would prevent the judicial branch from sealing court cases involving prominent businessmen, politicians, and judges from the public.
- **Permanent Legislative Committee on Ethics.** In addition to the Office of State Ethics, create a permanent bipartisan committee to hold accountable fellow members of the state legislature. The committee would have the power to investigate the conduct of members of the legislature, issue subpoenas, and recommend reprimand, censure or expulsion to the legislature.

Secretary Bysiewicz has long advocated for comprehensive ethics reform. This legislative session she testified before the Government Administration and Elections Committee and the Judiciary Committee to register her continued support on these issues.